

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 04704 150845Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 SAA-01 SES-02 CIAE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 OMB-01 AID-05
SSM-03 /085 W
-----096051 150848Z /21

O P 150753Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9231
INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM
CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON ENG
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER
COMSIXTHFLT
CTF SIX ZERO
CTF SIX ONE
CTF SIX TWO
CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO
FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN
DIA WASHDC
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PINS PINT MILI ASEC LE
SUBJ: LEBANESE SITUATION: AUGUST 15, 1978 - 10:00 HOURS LOCAL

REF: BEIRUT 4689 (DTG 141208Z AUG 78)

1. CEASE-FIRE HOLDING.

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A. THE EAST BEIRUT CEASE-FIRE CONTINUES TO HOLD,
AND THERE HAS BEEN NO MAJOR FIGHTING FOR THREE
DAYS - SINCE THE NIGHT OF AUGUST 11. IN THE WORDS
OF L'ORIENT-LE JOUR, "TIMID OPTIMISM" PREVAILS.
NEVERTHELESS, ARMED CHRISTIAN MILITIAMEN ARE
STILL ON THE STREETS OF ASHRAFIYAH.

B. ACCORDING TO L'ORIENT-LE JOUR, THE NEXT KEY STEP IS THE WITHDRAWAL OF SYRIAN FORCES FROM THE QARANTINA BRIDGE. THE GOL HAD ASKED SUDANESE SOLDIERS OF THE ARAB DETERRENT FORCES TO TAKE OVER THE BRIDGE, BUT KHARTOUM HAD REFUSED, L'ORIENT-LE JOUR SAID. FOREIGN MINISTER FUAD BOUTROS CALLED IN THE SUDANESE AMBASSADOR AUGUST 14 AND ASKED HIM TO REQUEST THE SUDANESE GOVERNMENT TO RECONSIDER ITS DECISION, THE PAPER REPORTED. (SARKIS TOLD AMBASSADOR AUGUST 14 THAT BOTH SAUDIS AND SUDANESE HAD REFUSED TAKE UP POSITIONS ON BRIDGE.)

C. AFTER WITHDRAWAL FROM THE BRIDGE, THERE WILL BE DISCUSSIONS ON SYRIAN EVACUATION OF SEVEN POSITIONS IN THE GENERAL VICINITY OF THE RIZK TOWER, INCLUDING THE CHAYA BUILDING, L'ORIENT-LE JOUR ADDED.

2. HOSS STILL IN SYRIA.

PRIME MINISTER AL HOSS HELD A SECOND DAY OF TALKS WITH SYRIAN PRESIDENT ASSAD IN LATAKIA THE MORNING OF AUGUST 15. HOSS IS SCHEDULED TO RETURN TO BEIRUT THE EVENING OF AUGUST 15. BOTH SIDES HAVE SO FAR REFRAINED FROM DISCUSSING DETAILS OF THE TALKS WITH THE PRESS.

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3. FAKHANI DEATH TOLL RISES.

REUTERS, QUOTING INFORMED SOURCES ON AUGUST 14, REPORTED AUTHORITIES HAD IDENTIFIED 102 PEOPLE KILLED, INCLUDING 22 CHILDREN, AND MORE THAN 80 PEOPLE WOUNDED BY THE AUGUST 13 EXPLOSION IN AN APARTMENT HOUSE IN FAKHANI, WEST BEIRUT. ON AUGUST 14, AUTHORITIES RESCUED FOUR PEOPLE STILL ALIVE FROM THE RUBBLE - THREE CHILDREN AND ONE OLD MAN. MEANWHILE, ALL PALESTINIAN GROUPS, INCLUDING THE PFLP/GC, HAVE STRONGLY DENIED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE EXPLOSION.

4. PEACE SHIP LEAVES.

AFTER BEING REFUSED PERMISSION TO DOCK IN BEIRUT PORT, ABIE NATHAN'S PEACE SHIP LEFT FOR CYPRUS WHERE IT DOCKED IN LARNACA ON AUGUST 14. NATHAN PLANS TO GIVE THE MEDICINES, TOYS, AND AMBULANCE ON BOARD TO GREEK-CYPRIOT REFUGEES, ACCORDING TO WIRE-SERVICE REPORTS.

DECONTROL OCTOBER 15, 1978.
PARKER

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